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United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Research Administration  
Bureau of Animal Industry

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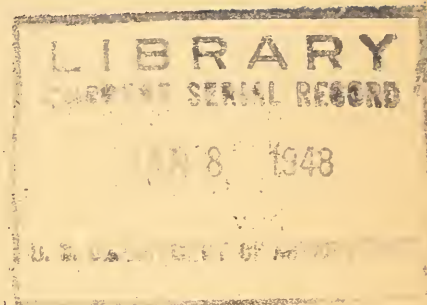
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SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS

in the

MEXICAN OUTBREAK OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

With Supplementary Information  
on United States Cooperation  
in Control Measures



A full understanding of the recent changes in the foot-and-mouth disease program in Mexico can best be obtained through a review of the statements and recommendations issued during the past few weeks by the Department officials, The Industry Advisory Committee, and the Sub-Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease of The House Committee on Agriculture. In this supplement we are presenting for your attention (1) Dr. Simms' statement of December 3, with attachments presented to the Sub-Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease of The House Committee on Agriculture, (2) the November 26 release to the Livestock Industry by the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease, (3) the report and recommendations on the future foot-and-mouth disease program made by the Sub-Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease of The House Committee on Agriculture. (4) Department Release of December 9 relating to the meeting in Washington, of the Mexican-United States Commission for the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease.

NOTE: This report has been prepared on the basis of the best information obtainable at the time of compilation but is subject to revision and amplification as new facts become available. Additional supplemental reports will be issued as significant developments in eradication work occur. The first report in this series was prepared January 28, 1947.

December 3, 1947

## THE CHANGE IN THE FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE PROGRAM IN MEXICO

Statement by Dr. B. T. Simms, Chief, Bureau of Animal Industry,  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

As announced in the press release of November 26, the change in the program has come about through the request of officials of the Mexican Government. From the beginning of this work the Mexican officials and our own people have been in complete agreement that the purpose of eradication of the disease could be accomplished only through a vigorous application of the slaughter method. In other words, the susceptible animals of infected and exposed herds had to be destroyed while quarantine restrictions prohibited the further spread of the disease through control of the movements of animals, animal products, and people. It was recognized at that time that this procedure would place a considerable strain upon the economy of Mexico because of the large number of animals (a little over 1,000,000 cattle and a like number of small animals) that would be involved. Mexican officials were of the opinion that the Government and the people of the Republic could mobilize for a fast moving eradication campaign and that they could stand the strain the slaughter program would place upon the economy of the country.

Later, in early August, after the campaign had been under way for several months, the Mexican Government was besieged with requests from livestock owners, livestock associations, and public officials, in the infected area to make a change to use vaccination instead of the strict slaughter program. This proposal was presented to the Department through the State Department but was rejected on the basis that the use of vaccines would hamper the slaughter method and tend to erase the already slim margin of hope for success. Since there was still promise that the disease could be eradicated, the Mexican Government acceded to our insistence to continue the program without change, and proposals for the use of vaccines were dropped.

During the month of September there was a very decided slow-down in the work. The incident at Senguio, Michoacan, on September 1, involving the massacre of a Mexican veterinarian and his Army escort, caused a good deal of consternation and prevented the continuance of the work in many sections for a temporary period. During the middle of September, at the time of the Mexican National Holidays, Army troops and vehicles were moved to Mexico City and other large population centers, thus making it virtually impossible to continue work during that period. The return of the troops and transportation to the work areas was slow.

When the work was resumed after the slow-down, inspections in the field showed that the disease had gained considerable ground during the interim because of a lack of quarantine enforcement. As the inspection crews moved



farther and farther into new territory, it became apparent that the disease was continuing to spread even though the quarantine lines had been reestablished. The most strenuous efforts to tighten the quarantine controls within the work areas were not sufficient to stop the unauthorized movements of susceptible animals, animal products, and people. Although the quarantine restrictions and the slaughter program kept the disease from moving ahead in its usual rapid course, there continued to be a slow spreading within the main quarantine area. The work of eradication was intensified and the field parties were regrouped in order to hem in the new areas of infection and stamp them out. In this effort the slaughtering of animals reached as high as 28,000 cattle and 30,000 small animals per week.

The representatives of both Governments undertook to reevaluate the ultimate scope of the slaughter campaign in the light of the latest knowledge of the spread of the disease. It became apparent that the existing extent of the infection was such that, although many of the animals remaining within the general quarantine area are apparently uninfected, as a practical matter the continuance of the slaughter campaign to its conclusion would mean the necessary destruction of the greater number of the susceptible animals in that area. Estimates of these numbers range from 4,500,000 to 5,000,000 cattle and a similar number of small animals. Mexican Government officials then presented to the Commission their conclusions that Mexico could not stand the economic shock of this wholesale destruction plus the disruptions brought about by the quarantines, etc., and therefore offered the proposal for a change in the program. Our representatives about the same time had come to the conclusion that even though the Mexican Government should determine to go ahead with the slaughter program, the infection had fastened itself upon such a large proportion of the susceptible animals of the country that neither the Mexican Government nor the people could see it through to a finish. Our experiences with the efforts of the Mexican Army to enforce quarantines within the infected area and the poor reception of the people to the restrictions of these quarantines convinced us that at this point nothing short of the entire slaughter of all the susceptible animals within the zone would accomplish the job. Accordingly, the Mexican proposal was accepted.

The effect of the change is to move from the eradication program to one aimed at control of the disease within the presently infected area. To accomplish this, a program along the following lines is contemplated. This may be modified according to the desires of Congress and also to effect agreement with the responsible Mexican officials. It is hoped that means can also be developed to close in on the infection gradually and that eradication can finally be accomplished.

1. The maintenance and strengthening of the quarantine lines at the northern and southern extremities of the presently quarantined area. The northern line runs in a general westerly direction from Tampico on the Gulf coast.

2. The maintenance of brigades of men and equipment at strategic places along the quarantine lines to quarantine and eradicate any foci of infection that may spring up outside the lines or immediately within such lines.

3. Assistance to Mexico in the setting up and operating of facilities for the manufacture of foot-and-mouth disease vaccines. It is anticipated that these vaccines will be used within the quarantined area to slow down the spread of the disease.

4. Continuation of the program to purchase 50,000,000 to 60,000,000 pounds of canned meat in northern Mexico to permit the livestock people of that area an outlet for their produce.

5. Continuation of the presently constituted border patrol with its embargo upon the importation of domestic ruminants and swine from Mexico and restrictions upon importations of other products which might bring in the virus of the infection.

6. Cooperation in research with established foot-and-mouth disease research stations in other countries and the formulation of plans and recommendations for such a research institute to be operated by the United States.

We realize the difficulties involved in any attempt to maintain quarantine lines against foot-and-mouth disease. We are encouraged to undertake the job because the quarantine lines take practical advantage of the natural geographic and economic dividing lines in Mexico and because the people of the northern Mexican states, having a market for the meat from their cattle; will, from all indications, continue to give active support to that quarantine enforcement.

The alternatives are either to push ahead with the slaughter program regardless of the Mexican position or to withdraw to our border. Obviously, we cannot continue the slaughter program if the Mexican Government will not agree. Even if that Government did agree, our experiences during the past several months and our knowledge of the present situation clearly show that it would be impossible to carry such a program to successful completion. Unreasonable insistence would lead, in our judgment, to failure, probably with some very unpleasant incidents to highlight the breakdown of the campaign and an invitation from the Mexican Government or the Mexican people themselves to withdraw to our border. Either of these alternatives seems much less desirable than to follow a moderate course which has possibility of holding the disease within the present area.



Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease

Financial Report from beginning of campaign through November 22, 1947

Source of Funds:

Appropriated by Public Law 22, approved March 27, 1947 .....	\$ 9,000,000
Appropriated by Public Law 122, approved June 27, 1947 .....	1,500,000
Appropriated by Public Law 161, approved July 3, 1947 .....	5,000,000
Total .....	<u>\$15,500,000</u>

Provided by Public Law 266 (as amended by Public Law 271),  
both approved July 30, 1947:

Direct appropriation .....	100,000
Transfers from Commodity Credit Corporation .....	21,000,000
Total .....	<u>21,100,000</u>

Total available funds .....	<u>\$36,600,000</u>
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Funds Furnished Mexican-United States Commission from Beginning of  
Campaign through November 22, 1947:

Disbursements:

Indemnities for cattle and small

animals slaughtered ..... 26,045,365

United States share of expenses of

joint commission ..... 1,091,034 \$27,136,399

Unobligated ..... 5,100,715

Total United States funds made available to  
joint commission:

By the United States ..... 31,000,000

By Mexico (6,000,000 pesos) ..... 1,237,114 \$32,237,114

Estimated United States Obligations from Beginning of Campaign  
through November 22, 1947:

Payments made to joint commission ..... \$31,000,000

Other expenses:

Personal services ..... 1,203,766

Equipment ..... 2,800,361

Supplies and materials ..... 116,498

Transportation of things (including household goods) ... 182,155

Travel, subsistence, quarters, and living allowances, etc. 627,616

Total, estimated obligations ..... \$35,930,396

Unobligated ..... 669,604

Total available funds ..... \$36,600,000

Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease

and slaughter - - - - -

Slaughter Statistics

Cattle

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Average Value</u>
April 10 through Nov. 22	504,560	\$24,933,405	\$ 49.92

Swine, Sheep, and Goats

Small Animals

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Average Value</u>
October 6 through Nov. 22 <u>1/</u>	176,595	\$896,806	\$ 5.08

Infected Municipalities  
in Mexico

Calendar Year 1947

Number

June 20	334
July 24	357
August 30	426
September 22	423
October 31	447
November 22	455

1/ Reported, but unverified, slaughter of swine, sheep, and goats prior to October 6--181,653.



Released to Livestock Industry and for  
General Publication.

November 26, 1947

In session at Albuquerque early this week the National Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Agriculture on the Control and Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease in the Republic of Mexico considered the proposed realignment of the program to protect this nation against the spread of Foot-and-Mouth disease in Mexico.

The Advisory Committee appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture last spring to represent the interests of the livestock industry in the program, has kept in close touch with developments south of the border. Committee members include Albert K. Mitchell, Albert, N.M., Chairman; J. Elmer Brock, Kaycee, Wyoming, Vice-Chairman; Wayland Hopley, Atlantic, Iowa, Secretary; C. E. Weymouth, Amarillo, Texas; Coke Stephenson, Junction, Texas; Carlos Tonstadt, Tucson and E. Ray Cowden, Phoenix, Arizona; Dr. C. U. Duckworth, Sacramento and R. E. Boyle, Fontana, California, and Horace H. Henning, Albuquerque.

A sub-committee of the Advisory group made an extended trip to Mexico in the early summer, visiting all fields of operations. This committee made specific recommendations for improving and expediting the program, most of which were put into effect.

"At one of its early meetings the Advisory Committee adopted as its recommendation of policy the complete slaughter program of infected and exposed animals. This principle has never and is not now abandoned. It must be applied in whatever field of operation the Bureau of Animal Industry continues to function," the group stated.

"It appears that the Department of Agriculture's recently announced plan to regroup operations to control and eradicate foot-and-mouth disease in the Republic of Mexico is the best available program that can be worked out at this time. Continued efforts on part of our Government to intensify slaughter operations to completely eradicate the disease in the infected area have not brought success.

"The Mexican Government, thru diplomatic channels, has now indicated a request to regroup operations to meet economic and social conditions which go hand in hand with eradication of the disease. The inclusion of vaccine as a control measure comes at the insistence of the Mexican Government," the group continued.

"After careful consideration of all aspects of protecting our country against spread of the disease into northern Mexico, it seems advisable to withdraw eradication forces from the infected zone and concentrating our utmost efforts toward control and eradication of the disease at the extreme north and south lines of the affected area.

"Because it appears that complete eradication of the disease may take considerable time and since much can still be accomplished in the field of improving methods of vaccinating to control or eradicate the disease it seems advisable to use every resource available in this regard. In furthering this work a program of extensive research and experimentation seems necessary in the highly disease infected area of Central Mexico. Mexico has requested a vaccination program if any program is to continue," the Committee reported.

The first meeting of the National Industry Advisory Committee in May of this year recommended increased activity in a research program designed to control and eradicate foot-and-mouth disease. This recommendation has been reiterated at each succeeding meeting of the committee.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
ON FUTURE FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE PROGRAM

On December 26, 1946, the Department of Agriculture received reports of the outbreak of foot and-mouth-disease in Mexico. The disease is presumed to have been brought into Mexico by cattle imported from Brazil in violation of the Mexico-United States sanitation treaty.

On February 28, 1947, the Congress approved Public law 8 (80th Congress) authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to cooperate with the Government of Mexico in the control and eradication of this disease. The law was implemented promptly with ample appropriations and a campaign of eradication was undertaken.

That campaign has been under the direction of a joint Mexico-United States commission with the responsibility--so far as the United States is concerned--resting on the Department of Agriculture through its Bureau of Animal Industry, and on the Department of State.

Late in June, not entirely satisfied with the progress of the campaign, a committee of this Congress visited Mexico and spent a week inspecting the activities then under way. It was impressed by the need for a top-flight executive, one entirely free of bureaucratic restrictions and entanglements, to take over the direction of this campaign.

On its return to Washington the committee urgently recommended that there be created "the office of executive director of the campaign" to be filled by a man of "outstanding executive ability and experience" competent to "direct a campaign of this magnitude in all its ramifications and to bring about the speed, coordination, and efficiency which are absolutely essential to the success of this program." That recommendation has never been followed.

In spite of the slaughter of some 500,000 cattle and many small animals, the disease continued to gain ground until the Mexican government--whose wholehearted assent is of course a necessary prerequisite to any activity on Mexican soil--notified the Department of Agriculture on November 24, 1947, that the economy of that country could not stand the immediate slaughter of the tremendous number of livestock which had by that time become infected or exposed to the disease.

Accordingly, on November 26, 1947, the Department of Agriculture announced a "modification" of its program. In plain words this meant abandonment, at least for the present, of efforts to eradicate the disease from Mexico by the slaughter and burial method which has several times conquered it in the United States and acceptance, instead, of a quarantine and vaccination program designed to control the disease so as to prevent its spread outside the present generally infected area.

On the same day the Committee on Agriculture announced a hearing beginning December 3, 1947, in which all interested parties were invited to participate, for the purpose of analyzing the threat to the livestock industry and the



economy of this country presented by the failure of the eradication campaign, and to consider the best steps which might now be taken to keep the disease out of the United States.

Having considered carefully all of the evidence available, the committee makes the following recommendations:

#### Recommendations

1. That the campaign against foot-and-mouth disease in Mexico shall be conducted on the following basis: First, an all-out effort by both countries to hold a quarantine line immediately north of the present infected area, including a sterile zone as wide as possible south of such line in which all infected and exposed animals will be subject to immediate slaughter and burial, in order to prevent the spread of the disease into northern Mexico and the United States; Second, extension and enlargement southward of that sterile zone as rapidly as circumstances will permit, with vaccination being employed by the commission only as an adjunct to quarantine.
2. That it shall be understood definitely by all participants that the program now undertaken is not an abandonment of the effort to eradicate foot-and-mouth disease from this continent but is merely a postponement of that effort until it can be undertaken and accomplished in a manner which is more acceptable to the Mexican people and tolerable to the Mexican economy.
3. That the best available scientists and economists be assigned immediately to research and study in Mexico and elsewhere on the disease itself, its prevention and control, and the effect of the disease and of proposed eradication methods on the economy of Mexico and the United States.
4. That there be created forthwith the office of executive director of this campaign and that this office be filled by someone of outstanding executive ability, acceptable to the Governments of both countries, who shall have sole and complete authority for the conduct of the campaign and who shall--insofar as the United States is concerned--be responsible only and directly to the Secretary of Agriculture.
5. That there shall be a Congressional observer who shall work in coordination with the professional staff of the House Committee on Agriculture, whose duty it shall be to observe continuously and report to the Congress the progress of the program hereafter undertaken, with authority to see and examine all the books, records, and documents of the Joint Commission and of the Department of Agriculture pertaining to the campaign against the disease.
6. That the cost of the program hereafter shall be shared by the two Governments on substantially the basis on which the campaign was being operated immediately prior to November 26, 1947.
7. That the program substantially as outlined herein shall be made the basis of a new agreement between the Governments of the United States and Mexico.

Committee on Foot-and-Mouth Disease of the Committee on Agriculture  
George W. Gillie, Chairman, Sid Simpson, Ernest K. Bramblett, Walter K. Granger,  
Eugene Worley



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Agricultural Research Administration

Washington, December 9, 1947

Plans Made for Strengthening Defense Line Against Foot-and-Mouth Disease:

A strengthening of northern and southern lines of defense against foot-and-mouth disease of livestock in Mexico was agreed upon by the Mexican-United States Commission for the eradication of this disease in a two-day meeting with Undersecretary N. E. Dodd of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Undersecretary Oscar Flores of the Mexican Ministry of Agriculture, concluded here today.

The northern defense line begins at Tampico on the Gulf Coast and extends westward to Puerto Vallarta on the Pacific Coast. It ranges from 250 to 600 miles south of the international border. North of this defense line there is no known infection. Mexican soldiers and civilians will patrol this line on the ground and from the air to see that no animal crosses it. The southern defense line runs from the Gulf Coast to the Pacific Coast along the southern boundaries of the States of Veracruz and Oaxaca. South of this line there is no known infection.

Plans were discussed for a wire fence to be erected along these lines. Eradication forces will then work from these lines toward the infected area and thus establish buffer zones.

The Commission met in Washington to discuss modifications of the eradication campaign now in progress. The Commission stressed the fact that the changes in the methods of operation are all aimed at giving the utmost in protection against the spread of the disease to the clean areas of Mexico and the neighboring countries to the north and to the south.

The two-day discussion centered around the following points:

1. Methods for effecting the maximum effort by both countries to held and strengthen the existing quarantine lines to keep the disease from spreading.
2. The regrouping and concentration of field forces along the quarantine lines.
3. Methods by which the active cooperation and participation of the Mexican National Army could be most effectively utilized.
4. Details connected with the employment of technically qualified people including economists and others to conduct research and study of effects of the disease upon the economies of both countries.
5. Procedures and details involved in the scientific study of the disease, and the testing of available vaccines.